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ABSTRACT

The 2000 Student Outcomes Survey was a national survey of students who undertook vocational education and training (VET) during 1999 at a technical and further education (TAFE) institute in Australia. Questionnaires mailed to stratified, randomly selected samples of graduates and module completers yielded national response levels of 55.8% and 51.5%, respectively. The following were among the main findings: (1) 89.2% of the TAFE graduates were employed or in further study after their course, and 76.0% were employed after their training; (2) 71.0% of TAFE module completers were employed after their training; (3) 66.7% of graduates and 62.8% of module completers rated the overall quality of their TAFE training as 8 or higher on a 10-point scale; (4) of those who were unemployed before their training, 49.8% of the TAFE graduates and 41.1% of the TAFE module completers found work after their training; (5) of those who were employed before their training, 21.9% of TAFE graduates and 13.1% of TAFE module completers moved to a higher skilled occupation after their training; and (6) for 26.0% of employed TAFE graduates, the job they held on May 26, 2000, was their first full-time job. (Twenty-four tables/figures are included.) (MN)

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Statistics 2000

Student Outcomes Survey

In Summary

Australian Vocational Education & Training

Highlights for 2000 include:

- 89.2% of TAFE graduates were employed or in further study after their course.
- 76.0% of TAFE graduates were employed after their training.
- 71.0% of TAFE module completers (students who successfully completed part of a course only) were employed after their training.
- 66.7% of graduates and 62.8% of module completers rated the overall quality of their TAFE training as eight or more on a 10-point scale ranging from 'poor' to 'excellent'.
- 49.8% of TAFE graduates and 41.1% of TAFE module completers who were unemployed before their training found work after their training.
- 21.9% of employed TAFE graduates and 13.1% of TAFE module completers moved to a higher skilled occupation after their training.
- For just over one quarter of employed TAFE graduates (26.0%), their job at 26 May 2000 was their first full-time job.

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About the survey

The 2000 Student Outcomes Survey: in summary presents information gained from the national survey of students who undertook vocational education and training (VET) during 1999 at a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institute in Australia. Information is presented about two groups of students: graduates and module completers. Graduates were those students who completed their course during 1999 and graduated with a qualification from a course. Module completers were those students who successfully completed some training (generally for shorter periods) and had left the TAFE system at the time of completing the survey. A questionnaire was sent to a stratified, randomly selected sample of graduates and module completers with a national response rate of 55.8% and 51.5% respectively.

The definition of TAFE graduates has changed slightly for the 2000 survey. Previously TAFE graduates who had completed a qualification from a course of at least 200 hours or one semester in duration were included. The 2000 survey included all TAFE graduates who completed a qualification irrespective of the number of hours of their course. Additionally, the proportions shown throughout this publication have been derived on the base of stated responses. This differs slightly to what has been done in previous years where the proportions were derived on the total of stated and not stated responses. Finally, as the survey was undertaken as a sample the responses have been weighted to population benchmarks. In previous years the graduate component of the survey was undertaken as a census and therefore no weighting was undertaken. One of the effects of weighting data is that proportions are based on the population rather than on the number of responses. For instance, the survey shows that 53.1% of graduates were female, however the proportion of female graduates that responded was actually 57.7%. What this shows is that females are more likely than males to respond to the survey.

While comparisons can be made between graduates and module completers there are some differences between the groups that should be noted. Graduates, on average, undertake at least twice as much training as module completers (median length of training of 10 months compared to 5 months). Graduates generally had a higher level of schooling compared to module completers with 52.5% of graduates and 45.2% of module completers having completed year 12 or equivalent. Graduates (53.1%) are more likely to be female than module completers (50.1%) and graduates (27 years) on average are younger than module completers (32 years). All these factors are likely to have an impact on employment related outcomes.

Comparisons have been made throughout this publication where they are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. Any figures which have a relative standard error greater than 25% have been marked with an * as estimates of this magnitude are not reliable for most practical purposes. Refer to the technical notes at the end of the publication for more information on the precision of survey estimates.

A non-response analysis, using a telephone methodology was undertaken on a sample of non-respondents to examine whether any non-response bias exists. The analysis involved comparing mail respondents with a representative sample of non-respondents interviewed by telephone. The non-respondents to the mail questionnaire are more likely to be: male, employed after the training, have achieved their main reason for doing the training and rate each aspect of the training as 'satisfied'.

What does TAFE offer students?

Career advancement. TAFE training increases chances of finding work, advances careers and increases salary levels, although graduates are more likely to achieve these outcomes than module completers.

A chance to move occupations. TAFE offers the chance of moving to higher skilled occupations after training. Graduates are again more likely to move to higher skilled occupations than module completers.

Relevant training. For those already in the workforce TAFE provides relevant training and meets employed students' expectations. Employed graduates thought their training was more relevant to their employment than module completers.

High quality training. Graduates and module completers are generally happy with the overall quality and provision of their training, with graduates generally more satisfied than module completers.

Time series - graduate outcomes

Although time series information has been presented for graduates, the 2000 survey differed from the previous four surveys on TAFE graduates. These differences have caused a break in the series (see the technical notes section for more information on the break in series on page 15 of this publication).

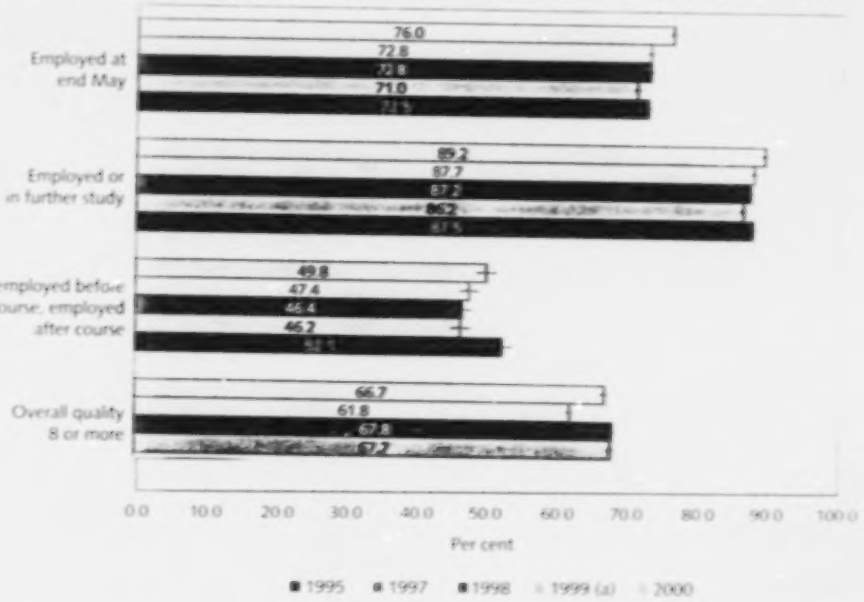
Even noting this break in series, most of the key outcome measures that are collected from the surveys have remained fairly stable since the data was first collected in 1995[a] (Figure 1). This is particularly so for the employment indicators. Although there appears to have been increases in the following outcome indicators most of the increase from 1999 to 2000 is due to the changes to the survey definition and estimation procedure.

The proportion of persons employed or in further study has increased slightly since the 1995 survey. In 1995, the proportion of graduates employed or in further study was 87.5%. This proportion fell slightly in 1997 and increased marginally over the next two surveys to 89.2% in 2000. The employment rate of graduates at the end of May has followed a very similar pattern. In 1995 it was 72.5%, dropping slightly in 1997 to 71.0% and then staying steady at 72.8% over the next two surveys before increasing to 76.0% in 2000.

Those graduates who were unemployed before their training and got a job afterwards have also shown a fairly similar pattern of movement. From the 2000 survey results almost one in every two graduates (49.8%) that were unemployed before their course had found work within six months of completing their course. This result is higher than that achieved in the previous three years but is slightly lower than the rate achieved in the 1995 survey.

Graduates' satisfaction with the overall quality of the course has remained relatively steady over the last four years with approximately two thirds reporting a score of eight or more out of 10 (where one or two was considered 'poor' and nine or 10 was 'excellent').

Figure 1: Per cent of graduates by four key outcome measures, 1995, 1997, 1998, 1999(a) and 2000



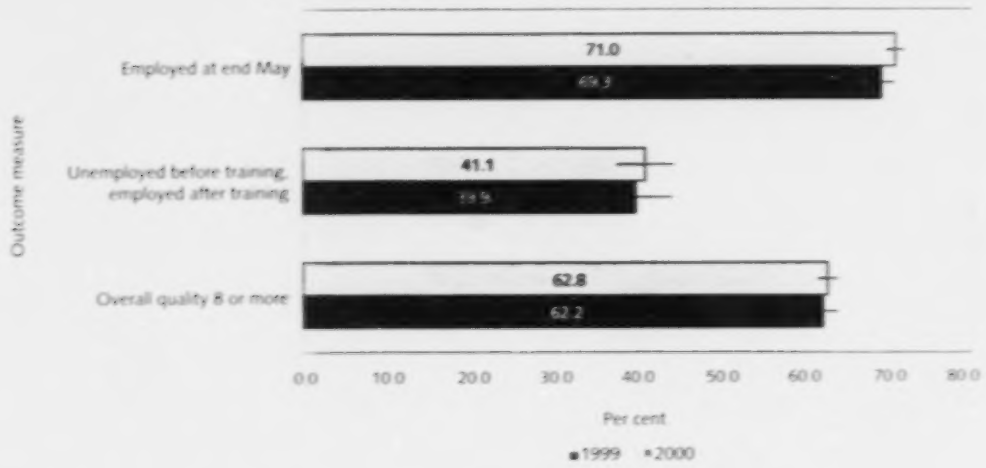
(a) There has been a break in series between 1999 and 2000. This break in series limits any comparison between years and therefore extreme caution should be exercised when using data prior to 2000 and comparing it with current survey estimates.

Note: Standard error bars have been included on the figures throughout this publication and provide an indication of the error associated with the estimate that has been produced. More information on standard errors is provided in the technical notes section on page 15 of this publication.

Time series – module completer outcomes

The survey of module completers was first conducted in 1999 and therefore only two years' data are available. As with graduates, most of the key outcome measures that have been collected from the survey have remained fairly stable since 1999 (Figure 2) and there is no significant difference between the employment or overall satisfaction indicators from the 1999 survey to the 2000 survey.

Figure 2: Per cent of module completers by key outcome measures, 1999 and 2000



Employment or further study for TAFE graduates

After completing their course graduates often go on to do further study, many while working, others while looking for work and some as an alternative to working or seeking work. Module completers are excluded from this analysis as, by definition, a module completer must have left the TAFE system and not be in further study at the time they received the survey form.

Overall, in 2000 almost nine in every ten graduates (89.2%) were either working or in further study after their course compared to 77.2% before beginning their course. Figure 3 compares the work and study patterns of graduates before and after their course and categorises graduate activity into two broad groups: those in work or study, and those not working and not studying.

Figure 3: Per cent of graduates in work or study

	Before course		After course
Working or in study	77.2	↑	89.2
Not working and not studying:	22.8	↓	10.8
Looking for work	9.8	↓	5.8
Not looking for work	12.6	↓	4.7
Total	**100.0**		**100.0**

After completing their current study, further study was undertaken by 38.4% of graduates. The major reasons for undertaking further study are work related, 'to get a job or own business' 26.4%, 'to get a better job or promotion' 18.0% and 'to get extra skills for my present job' 14.3%.

Employment status after training

Many students combine work and study. They come to TAFE with current work experience and continue this work and study pattern during their training and even after completing their training. This pattern of work and study is slightly different for graduates and module completers. Graduates are more likely to be employed (76.0%) in comparison with module completers (71.0%). The percentage of unemployed graduates (11.2%) and module completers (12.1%) is about the same, while module completers (16.5%) are more likely than graduates (12.1%) to be not in the labour force.

For graduates, about two thirds (68.1%) were employed in the six months prior to commencing their course, 66.2% worked during their course and 76.0% were working at 26 May 2000 (i.e. about 6 months after course completion). For module completers, 67.8% were employed before their training, 63.8% during their training and 71.0% were working after their training.

For just over one quarter of employed graduates (26.0%), their job at 26 May 2000 was their first full-time job. The survey indicated that 59.9% of employed graduates were working with the same employer as they had during their final semester of study. The average weekly earnings for first full-time graduate job holders was $494. By comparison 19.6% of module completers were in their first full-time job at 26 May, while 62.2% were working with the same employer as they had during their training. For module completers in their first full-time job, average weekly earnings were $527.

Table 1 provides the labour force status at 26 May 2000 for students and shows that:

- Graduates (76.0%) are more likely to be employed than module completers (71.0%).
- Male students are far more likely to be employed full time than female students.
- Female students are far more likely to be employed part time than male students.
- Female graduates are slightly more likely to be unemployed (12.3%) compared with male graduates (9.8%).
- Females, whether they are graduates or module completers (15.2% and 22.1% respectively) are more likely to be not in the labour force compared with males (8.7% and 10.8% respectively).

Table 1: Per cent of graduates and module completers by labour force status and sex at 26 May 2000

	Graduates			Module completers		
Labour force status	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Employed*	80.9	71.7	76.0	76.9	65.2	71.0
Full-time	65.2	37.2	50.4	61.6	32.7	47.1
Part-time	13.3	32.1	23.3	13.6	31.1	22.4
Not employed	19.1	28.3	24.0	23.1	34.8	29.0
Unemployed	9.8	12.3	11.2	11.8	12.4	12.1
Seeking full-time work	6.5	6.3	6.4	8.7	5.7	7.2
Seeking part-time work	3.3	6.0	4.7	3.1	6.7	4.9
Not in the labour force	8.7	15.2	12.1	10.8	22.1	16.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

* Employed includes 'not stated hours' for full-time and part-time.

The employment pathways for students before commencing their training to after their training are illustrated in Figure 4. It shows that the change in employment status before commencing training to after training for students is quite different. Graduates improve their employment prospects to a greater extent than do module completers. The net increase in employment after training for graduates is about eight percentage points while for module completers it is about three percentage points. Much of this increase is coming from graduates moving from not looking for work to employment. Module completers who were originally not looking for work have not moved to employment at the same rate as graduates. The improvement in the proportion unemployed is also slightly better for graduates than for module completers.

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Figure 4: Per cent of graduates and module completers by labour force status before and after training

	Graduates		Module completers	
	Before training	After training	Before training	After training
Total working * (full-time & part-time)	68.1	76.0	67.8	71.0
Full-time working	39.5	50.4	41.2	47.1
Part-time working	26.6	23.3	24.2	22.4
Total not employed	**31.9**	**24.0**	**32.2**	**29.0**
Looking for work (unemployed)	14.1	11.2	13.2	12.1
Not looking for work (not in labour force)	17.1	12.1	18.3	16.5
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

* Total working includes 'not stated hours' for full-time and part-time

Movement to higher skilled occupations[1]

Vocational education and training provides the opportunity for employed students to move occupations, change jobs and advance in their job after completing their training. Graduates are more likely to move to a higher skilled occupation than module completers. Overall 21.9% of graduates and 13.1% of module completers employed both before and after their training moved to a higher skilled occupation after their training. Students with jobs in the lowest skilled occupations before commencing their training are more likely to move to more skilled occupations after their training.

About half the graduates employed as *labourers and related workers* (51.3%), *and elementary clerical, sales and service workers* (47.2%) before training moved to higher skilled occupations after training (Figure 5). The pattern was similar for module completers, although the magnitude of the movement was much less, with 34.4% and 30.4% moving respectively from the same lower skilled occupations before training to higher skilled occupations after training.

Major areas of movement occurred in the following occupation categories:

- **Labourers and related workers.** Where 22.0% of employed graduates moved into the *tradespersons and related workers* category, a further 10.4% moved into the *intermediate clerical, sales and service workers* category. Module completers for this occupation category also moved into the *tradespersons and related workers* category (8.7%), *intermediate clerical, sales and service workers* and *elementary clerical, sales and service workers* categories (6.6% each) after their training.
- **Elementary clerical, sales and service workers.** Where 15.8% of employed module completers moved into the *intermediate clerical, sales and service workers* category while a similar proportion of graduates also moved to this same category (17.3%) and a further 13.2% of graduates moved into the *tradespersons and related workers* category.
- **Intermediate production and transport workers category**. 14.2% of employed graduates moved into the *tradespersons and related workers category*.
- **Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers category**. Where 6.0% of employed graduates moved into the *professionals* category, a further 4.7% moved into the *associate professionals* category.

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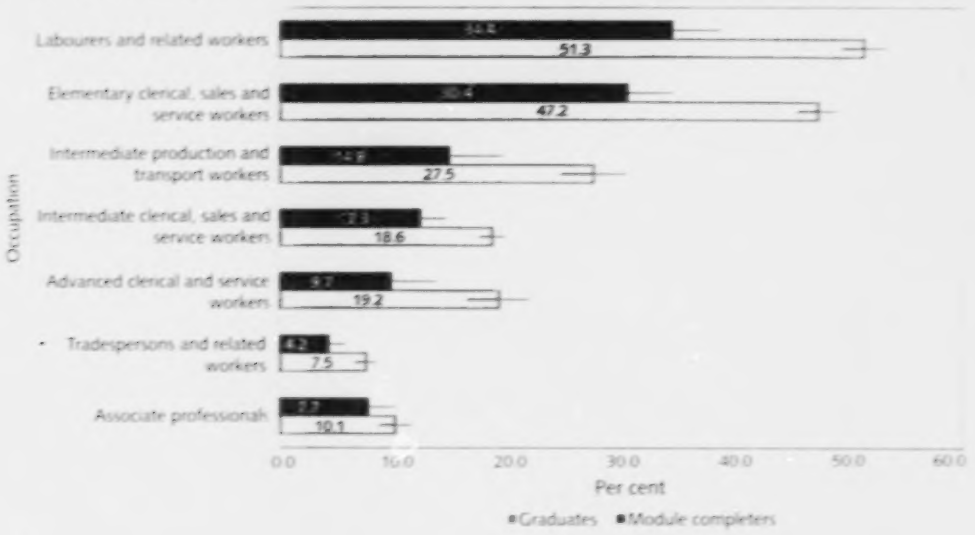
Figure 5: Percentage movement to higher skilled occupations of employed graduates and module completers



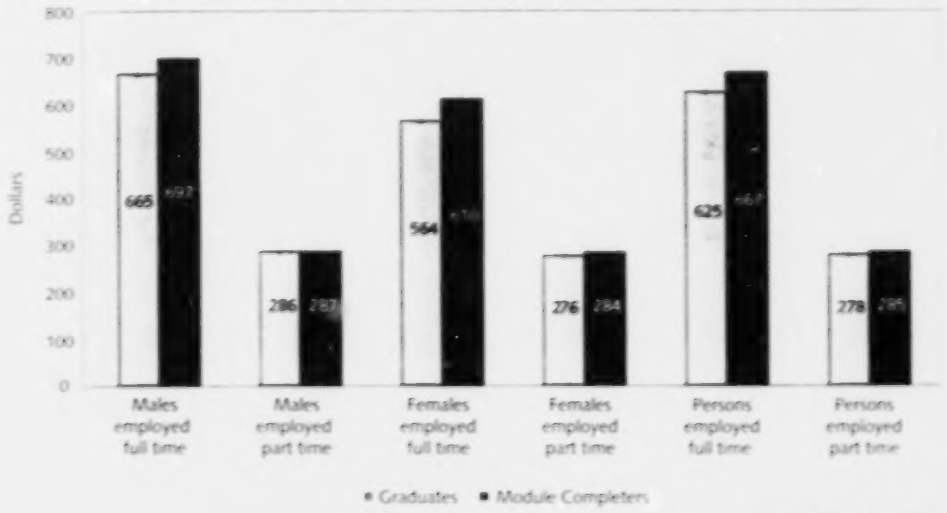
Note: The professionals and managers categories have been excluded from Figure 5, as the skill levels of both are very similar.

Overall, graduates showed greater occupational movement than module completers. However, for both graduates and module completers, professionals showed the least occupational movement, with 84.2% and 92.6% respectively remaining in the same occupation before and after their training.

Average weekly earnings

The average weekly earnings of graduates and module completers varied slightly by full-time and part-time status and sex (Figure 6). Overall, males (either graduates or module completers) earned slightly more than their female counterparts. Female graduates ($564) and module completers ($610) working full-time earned less than their male counterparts who were also working full-time ($665 for graduates and $697 for module completers). Module completers employed full time ($667) had slightly higher average weekly earnings compared with graduates ($625). However, both male ($286) and female graduates working part-time ($276) earned about the same as male ($287) and female ($284) module completers working part-time.

Figure 6: Average weekly earnings of employed graduates and module completers



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Australia

In 1999 there were approximately 1.65 million clients (students) undertaking training in publicly funded VET programs, representing an increase of 7.3%

Australia	Graduates (a)	Module completers (a)
Respondents to survey	41 660	7 922
Females	53.1%	50.1%
15-24 age group	42.4%	34.4%
Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander	2.0%	2.2%
Non-English Speaking Background (b)	31.3%	27.4%
Born in overseas country	25.1%	22.7%
Employed at end May	76.0%	71.0%
Employed in first full-time job (% of employed)	26.0%	19.6%
Believed training relevant to job (% of employed)	76.9%	58.6%
Occupation most employed (% of employed)		
- males Tradespersons and related workers	38.2%	27.3%
- females Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers	39.0%	31.4%
- persons Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers	24.2%	19.5%
Industry most employed (% of employed)		
- males Manufacturing	17.8%	17.7%
- females Health and community services	27.7%	19.3%
- persons Health and community services	16.0%	R 17.5%
First full-time job (average weekly earnings)	$494	$527
Enrolled in further study	38.4%	N/A
Overall quality rating of training 'satisfied' (8 or more out of 10)	66.7%	62.8%

Notes: (a) See the technical notes section at the back of the publication for application of confidence intervals. (b) Non-English Speaking Background: students speak a language other than English at home or one or both parents speak a language other than English as their first language. R – *Retail trade* was the industry where most were employed for module completers.

Note: Caution should be exercised when comparing state/territory information as each jurisdiction has different economic, demographic and social profiles. These factors are likely to have an impact on a range of employment and satisfaction related outcomes.

Northern Territory	Graduates (a)	Module completers (a)
Respondents to survey	487	1 188
Females	55.6%	48.6%
Age 15-24 age group	28.4%	31.5%
Non-English Speaking Background	30.6%	27.9%
Born in overseas country	21.9%	18.6%
Employed at end May	80.2%	77.9%
Employed in first full time job (% of employed)	20.3%	13.7%
Enrolled in further study	45.0%	N/A

Western Australia	Graduates (a)	Module completers (a)
Respondents to survey	5 707	846
Females	52.6%	50.5%
Age 15-24 age group	52.6%	34.5%
Non-English Speaking Background	27.7%	25.8%
Born in overseas country	27.9%	27.7%
Employed at end May	73.6%	73.1%
Employed in first full time job (% of employed)	28.2%	16.1%
Enrolled in further study	40.1%	N/A

South Australia	Graduates (a)	Module completers (a)
Respondents to survey	2 819	795
Females	49.3%	49.0%
Age 15-24 age group	41.1%	30.6%
Non-English Speaking Background	23.4%	20.6%
Born in overseas country	17.3%	18.8%
Employed at end May	82.7%	75.1%
Employed in first full time job (% of employed)	26.5%	20.2%
Enrolled in further study	37.1%	N/A

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in summary

Queensland	Graduates	Module completers
Respondents to survey	8,489	992
Females	52.3%	51.2%
Age 15-24 age group	37.1%	30.0%
Non-English Speaking Background	18.0%	19.8%
Born in overseas country	19.2%	19.1%
Employed at end May	79.3%	70.7%
Employed in first full time job (% of employed)	20.9%	20.7%
Enrolled in further study	33.6%	N/A

New South Wales	Graduates	Module completers
Respondents to survey	11,402	1,072
Females	54.3%	54.8%
Age15-24 age group	41.2%	38.6%
Non-English Speaking Background	37.2%	33.3%
Born in overseas country	28.5%	25.7%
Employed at end May	74.0%	65.1%
Employed in first full time job (% of employed)	27.7%	19.7%
Enrolled in further study	41.3%	N/A

Australian Capital Territory	Graduates	Module completers
Respondents to survey	1,017	1,165
Females	51.5%	49.8%
Age 15-24 age group	50.7%	41.2%
Non-English Speaking Background	29.5%	28.7%
Born in overseas country	21.1%	21.0%
Employed at end May	82.0%	77.4%
Employed in first full time job (% of employed)	23.5%	20.0%
Enrolled in further study	35.9%	N/A

Victoria	Graduates	Module completers (a)
Respondents to survey	10,151	959
Females	52.9%	40.0%
Age 15-24 age group	46.3%	32.4%
Non-English Speaking Background	37.6%	29.1%
Born in overseas country	25.3%	21.1%
Employed at end May	76.4%	79.0%
Employed in first full time job (% of employed)	27.1%	20.6%
Enrolled in further study	35.9%	N/A

Tasmania	Graduates	Module completers
Respondents to survey	1,588	937
Females	48.5%	55.8%
Age 15-24 age group	40.5%	31.4%
Non-English Speaking Background	12.5%	11.9%
Born in overseas country	10.3%	12.4%
Employed at end May	79.5%	68.0%
Employed in first full time job (% of employed)	24.2%	16.9%
Enrolled in further study	34.6%	N/A

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Satisfaction outcomes

Graduates and module completers were asked whether they thought the training helped them to achieve the main reason for doing their training, whether or not the training was relevant to their employment at May 2000, and to rate the quality of the training on a number of aspects.

Overall, students reported they were happy with their training. Eight in every ten graduates (80.3%), and 70.5% of module completers indicated that their training helped them wholly or partly to achieve the main reason for undertaking the training.

A list of possible employment related benefits of completing the training was provided in the questionnaire and students employed at 26 May 2000 were asked to indicate which of these benefits they thought they had received as a result of completing their training.

There were distinct differences in benefits for graduates and module completers and male and female students. Table 2 provides a summary of the employment related benefits received by graduates and module completers. The main findings include:

- Graduates overall are more likely to achieve at least one benefit (69.5%) compared to module completers (43.1%).
- Male graduates (49.1%) are more likely than female graduates (35.7%) to obtain an increase in earnings or a promotion or increased status at work.
- Female graduates (48.0%) are more likely to either change jobs or get a job in comparison with male graduates (39.8%).
- Module completers follow the same pattern as graduates, in that males (23.3%) are more likely than females (14.6%) to obtain an increase in earnings or a promotion or increased status at work.
- Graduates (42.4%) were also more likely than module completers (19.3%) to obtain an increase in earnings or a promotion or increased status at work.

Table 2: Per cent of graduates and module completers by employment related benefits

	Graduates			Module completers		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
An increase in earnings	28.4	20.7	24.6	12.3	7.4	10.1
A promotion or increased status at work	20.7	15.0	17.8	11.0	7.2	9.2
A job	25.7	28.4	27.0	12.2	12.0	12.1
A change of job	14.1	19.6	16.9	7.8	10.2	8.9
At least one benefit	71.0	68.0	69.5	45.8	40.0	43.1

Overall, graduates reported higher levels of relevance of their training to employment compared with module completers. Over one in two graduates (52.0%) employed at 26 May 2000 regarded their course to be highly relevant to their employment while a further 24.9% thought it to be of some relevance. Employed module completers reported lower levels of relevance of their training to employment, with 28.7% stating it to be highly relevant and a further 29.9% thought it to be of some relevance.

Overall, students were satisfied with their training, with both graduates and module completers rating the overall quality of their training about the same at 7.9 and 7.7 out of 10 respectively. A number of aspects of the training were listed in the questionnaire and students were asked to rate each of these on a scale from one to ten where one or two was 'poor' and nine or ten was 'excellent' (Figure 7). Although the mean score for module completers (7.7) for the overall quality item was about the same as graduates (7.9), a slightly lower proportion of module completers (62.8%) rated the overall quality of their training as eight or above compared with graduates (66.7%). Both sets of students rated their instructors' knowledge of course content the highest, with a mean score of 8.2. This aspect was also ranked by graduates and module completers as the most important aspect of service (33.4% and 32.6% respectively). The two lowest rating items for graduates and module completers was student counselling services and availability of information about careers and jobs (6.5 for both for graduates and 6.2 and 6.4 respectively for module completers).

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Figure 7: Average rating of training by graduates and module completers

The overall quality of the training
The training value for money
The qualification in terms of being well regarded by employers
The usefulness of the training for your job prospects
Student counselling service
The information about careers and jobs available to you
Administration - handling of enquiries, enrolment, fee payment, results
The information you received when choosing your training
The convenience of both venue and class time
Access to library and learning resources
Having enough equipment for you to practice your skills
The quality of equipment provided for you to practice your skills
The presentation of training materials
The subject content in reflecting industry practice
Making methods of assessment clear to you
The balance between instruction and practice
The instructor's ability to relate to students
Your instructors' knowledge of subject content
0.0 1.0 2.0 3.0 4.0 5.0 6.0 7.0 8.0 9.0
Average score (scale 1 to 10)
Graduates
Module completers

Main reason for undertaking training

Graduates (76.8%) indicated they were more likely to undertake their training for vocational or job related reasons than module completers (65.4%) when asked to indicate their main reasons for undertaking the training. There are even further differences between the two groups when more detailed reasons for training are examined. Graduates appear to be more likely to undertake training as a way of entering the labour market, while module completers are more likely to undertake training to upgrade their skills. Table 3 shows that graduates were more likely to undertake their training to *get a job or own business* than module completers (23.3% compared to 16.6%) or because *it was a requirement of my job* (16.7% compared to 10.6%). On the other hand module completers were more likely to indicate *to get extra skills for my job* than graduates (20.4% compared to 14.3%). This is not surprising given that graduates (21.3%) are more likely to begin training as recent school leavers than module completers (14.4%).

Module completers were more likely to undertake training for non vocational reasons (34.6%) compared with graduates (23.2%).

Table 3: Per cent of graduates and module completers by main reason for undertaking training

	Graduates	Module completers
Vocational or work related reasons	**76.8**	**65.4**
To get a job (or own business)	23.3	16.6
To try for a different career	12.2	10.5
To get a better job or promotion	10.4	7.3
It was a requirement of my job	16.7	10.6
To get extra skills for my job	14.3	20.4
Non vocational reasons	**23.2**	**34.6**
Total	100.0	100.0

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Reasons for not continuing to study (module completers only)

As previously discussed, the definition of a module completer used in the survey was that the student could not be a graduate and must have successfully completed at least one module and left the TAFE system. All in-scope module completers were asked what their reasons were for not continuing or undertaking more TAFE training in 2000.

Module completers were initially allowed to nominate multiple responses. The most common reasons given were employment or training related:

- About one in four respondents indicating *I had gained what I wanted from the training I had completed* (24.3%).
- 21.4% indicated they *changed jobs or started a new job*.
- 17.1% stated that they got *the skills I needed for my job*.

Personal reasons were also important with:

- 18.9% indicating *there were too many pressures on my time*.
- 10.4% indicated *family reasons prevented me from continuing*.

Respondents were also asked to indicate their **main** reason for not continuing or undertaking more TAFE training in 2000. In general the reasons that module completers gave for not undertaking more TAFE training can be broken into three broad categories of:

- *Employment related reasons* (33.5% reported this reason for not continuing);
- *Training related reasons* (30.0%); and
- *Personal reasons* (28.4%) (Table 4).

Almost one in two respondents (47.2%) indicated *employment related* reasons or *they had gained what they wanted from the training*. About an additional one in three respondents gave *personal reasons* (28.4%) for not continuing or undertaking more TAFE training. What these results suggest is that three quarters (75.6%) of the respondents are giving external reasons or reasons that are beyond the immediate control of the TAFE system.

Table 4: Per cent of module completers by main reason for not undertaking more TAFE training

Employment related reasons	**33.5**
Changed jobs or started a new job	12.2
I lost my job	9.0
Training related reasons	**30.0**
I had gained what I wanted from the training	13.8
The training no longer related to my plan	3.8
The training was not what I expected	3.6
I transferred to or started other training	3.2
Personal reasons	**28.4**
Too many pressures on my time	10.1
Family reasons prevented me from continuing	5.6
Financial reasons prevented me from continuing	3.9
Other reasons	**8.1**
Total	100.0

Education and work before undertaking training

Students were asked about their education and employment experiences before commencing their TAFE training. The survey revealed that TAFE is not just for school leavers seeking a first qualification, it also caters for people with prior qualifications wanting to upgrade skills with further study. For both graduates and module completers, over half (61.0% and 59.1% respectively) had some type of post-school qualification.

Employment participation before commencing their training for graduates and module completers is about the same. For both graduates and module completers almost two thirds (66.1% and 65.4% respectively) worked either full-time or part-time before commencing their training.

Figure 8 provides the employment status of students before undertaking their training and shows that graduates are more likely to be employed on a permanent basis compared with module completers (39.2% and 36.6% respectively). However, module completers (4.7%) are more likely to be self employed than graduates (2.7%).

Figure 8: Per cent of graduates and module completers by employment status before undertaking training

The survey also revealed:

- Module completers (77.7%) are more likely to not have studied during the 6 months before commencing their training compared with graduates (65.4%).
- More module completers (8.0%) commenced their training while still at school than graduates (6.2%).
- Graduates had a higher level of schooling compared with module completers, with 52.5% of graduates and 45.2% of module completers having completed year 12 or equivalent.
- A slightly lower proportion of graduates (8.8%) than module completers (11.3%) had a bachelor degree or higher qualification before commencing their training.
- 39.5% of graduates were working full-time before commencing their course and 26.6% part-time. For module completers, 41.2% worked full-time and 24.2% worked part-time.
- The highest proportion of graduates employed before their course were in the *intermediate clerical, sales and service workers* (22.7%) occupation category followed by the *tradespersons and related workers* category (17.9%). This is the same pattern for module completers, where 17.6% worked as *intermediate clerical, sales and service workers* followed by *tradespersons and related workers* (17.4%).

About the training

Graduates were far more likely to be undertaking *health and community services* programs compared with module completers. On the other hand module completers were more likely to be undertaking basic numeracy, literacy, English as a second language and general skills development type training programs (*VET multifield education*) compared to graduates.

Over two thirds of graduates (67.3%) undertook programs in four fields of study (Table 5): *business, administration, economics* (21.6%), *health and community services* (19.5%), *engineering and surveying* (13.6%) and *services, hospitality, transportation* (12.6%). For module completers, just over two thirds (67.0%) undertook programs in four fields of study: *business, administration, economics* (22.3%), *VET multifield education* (19.1%), *engineering, surveying* (15.1%) and *services, hospitality, transportation* (10.5%).

Table 5: Per cent of graduates and module completers by field of study

	Graduates	Module completers
Land & marine resources, animal husbandry	4.1	5.8
Architecture, building	5.3	4.3
Arts, humanities, social sciences	6.5	5.7
Business, administration, economics	21.6	22.3
Law, legal studies	0.4	1.2
Education	2.4	2.1
Engineering, surveying	13.6	15.1
Health, community services	19.5	6.2
Science	6.1	7.6
Veterinary science, animal care	0.5	0.2*
Services, hospitality, transportation	12.6	10.5
VET multifield education	7.3	19.1
Total	100.0	100.0

Industry of employment[2]

Employment opportunities for students are better in some industries than others. Table 6 illustrates these differences by comparing the employment of students across the 17 major industry groups with the employment pattern for the total Australian workforce.

Graduates are over-represented in the *health and community services* and *accommodation, cafes and restaurant,* industries, while they are under represented, in the main, in the *wholesale trade*, the *property and business services,* and the *agriculture, forestry, fishing* industries. Module completers are over represented in the *retail trade* industry, while they are under represented in the *wholesale trade* industry.

Table 6 Per cent of graduates and module completers by industry of employment at 26 May 2000[2]

	Graduates	Module completers	All employed persons[3]
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	3.0	4.7	4.9
Mining	1.5	1.3	0.8
Manufacturing	11.7	12.4	13.0
Electricity, gas, water supply	0.8	1.1	0.7
Construction	8.6	7.2	7.8
Wholesale trade	1.6	2.0	4.9
Retail trade	15.1	17.5	14.6
Accommodation, cafes, restaurants	7.1	6.5	5.0
Transport, storage	3.4	3.7	4.6
Communications	1.3	1.7	2.0
Finance, insurance	2.4	2.6	3.7
Property and business services	9.8	10.3	11.3
Government administration, defense	3.5	4.6	3.8
Education	6.7	7.8	6.8
Health, community services	16.0	10.8	9.5
Cultural, recreational services	2.8	2.7	24
Personal, other services	4.7	3.2	3.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

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Student profile

The following table highlights some of the differences between graduates and module completers.

- **Age**. Graduates (27 years) on average are younger than module completers (32 years). There is a higher proportion of graduates aged under 25 years (42.4% compared to 34.4%) and a lower proportion aged 40 years and over (25.1% compared to 33.8%) than module completers.
- **Sex**. Graduates are more likely to be female (53.1%) compared module completers (50.1%).
- **Regionality**. Graduates (60.3%) are more likely to have a capital city as their home address than module completers (53.3%)
- **Disability**. Module completers (7.8%) are more likely to report they have a disability than graduates (5.0%).

Table 7: Per cent of graduates and module completers by general characteristics

	Graduates	Module completers	Australia[2]
Females	53.1	50.1	50.2
Median age	27 years	32 years	34 years
15-24 years of age	42.4	34.4	14.3
Aged 40 and over	25.1	33.8	41.5
Indigenous Australians (ATSI)	2.0	2.2	2.1
Non-English Speaking Background	31.3	27.4	N/A
Reported disability	5.0	7.8	19.3
Capital city as home address	60.3	53.3	63.8

Technical notes

Break in series

There has been a break in the time series data due to:

- A widening in the definition of the survey from those graduates who undertook a course of at least 200 hours or one semester in duration, to all graduates irrespective of the length of their course.
- The selection of a sample (as opposed to a census) of graduates, the responses of which are weighted to population benchmarks, compared with previous surveys in which a census of all graduates was surveyed.
- The removal of 'not stated' responses in the derivation of proportions.

By way of example, the increase for employed graduates shown in the 2000 survey over the 1999 and previous surveys is almost wholly due to the change in definition that was used for graduates in the 2000 survey. That is, if only those graduates who had undertaken a course of 200 hours or more were included in the derivation of the 2000 survey estimate, then the difference in the employment outcome from 1999 to 2000 would have only been 0.2 percentage points.

General

Generally the estimates provided throughout this publication have been at the national level and consequently the standard errors associated with these estimates are relatively low. However, some state/territory information has been presented, along with comparisons of graduates and module completers. Readers should therefore be aware that the most reliable results are for graduates at the national level, due primarily to the total number of responses received. The reliability of the estimates decrease with smaller sample sizes and vary with the size of the estimated proportions.

For example twice the standard error of employed graduates (sample size of 41 660) is 0.4 percentage points, compared with twice the standard error for employed module completers (sample size of 7 922) of 1.0 percentage point. For the states and territories twice the standard error of employed graduates in Queensland (sample size of 8 489) is 0.9 percentage points, compared with twice the standard error for employed module completers in Queensland (sample size of 960) of 2.9 percentage points. Twice the standard error is used as a measure of reliability of the estimates at the 95% confidence level.

To aid readers in understanding the estimates, the following table provides twice the standard errors associated with these estimates. For example, the estimate of employed (Australian) graduates after their course is 76.0%, however if we use the table below we notice that the true value of the estimate lies somewhere between 75.6% and 76.4%.

To illustrate how this confidence interval is derived, in the table below, go to the nearest estimated proportion as identified across the top of the table (that is, 80%) and move down this column until you get to the closest sample size on which proportion is based (42 000) which then gives a significance level of 0.4. Therefore a 95% confidence interval is plus or minus 0.4 percentage points; that is, the true estimate of employed graduates actually lies between 75.6% and 76.4% in 95% of cases.

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This table can be used for graduates and module completers.

Estimates of standard errors for survey percentages at the 95% confidence limit

	Estimated proportion								
Sample size	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%
100	6.0	8.0	9.2	9.8	10.0	9.8	9.2	8.0	6.0
200	4.2	5.7	6.5	6.9	7.1	6.9	6.5	5.7	4.2
300	3.5	4.6	5.3	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.3	4.6	3.5
400	3.0	4.0	4.6	4.9	5.0	4.9	4.6	4.0	3.0
500	2.7	3.6	4.1	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.1	3.6	2.7
600	2.4	3.3	3.7	4.0	4.1	4.0	3.7	3.3	2.4
700	2.3	3.0	3.5	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.5	3.0	2.3
800	2.1	2.8	3.2	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.2	2.8	2.1
900	2.0	2.7	3.1	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.1	2.7	2.0
1 000	1.9	2.5	2.9	3.1	3.2	3.1	2.9	2.5	1.9
1 100	1.8	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.8	2.4	1.8
1 200	1.7	2.3	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	2.3	1.7
1 600	1.5	2.0	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.0	1.5
3 000	1.1	1.5	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.5	1.1
4 000	0.9	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.3	0.9
6 000	0.8	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.8
8 000	0.7	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.7
10 000	0.6	0.8	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.6
11 000	0.6	0.8	0.9	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.6
12 000	0.5	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.5
42 000	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.3

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1 Employed graduates and module completers described their occupation and the main tasks performed in their job and on the basis of these data, graduates' and module completers' occupations were classified according to the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO 2nd edition).

2 Classified on the basis of the business or service carried out by the student's employer according to the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classifications (ANZSIC).

3 ABS publications, Labour Force Australia, catalogue 6203.0, May 2000; Australian Demographic Statistics, catalogue 3101.0, December 1998, 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers Survey, catalogue 4430.0.